

IN THE CLAIMS

1-15. (Canceled).

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16. (New) An attribute data correction method in a distribution system having a plurality of elements each including a computation device and a storage device, said attribute data correction method being performed by at least one of said plurality of elements, said method comprising the steps of:

storing in said storage device in said one element, an attribute data indicating an attribute of said one element;

receiving an attribute data of said one element, from at least another one of said plurality of elements;

determining, by said computation device in said one element, a content of said attribute data to be held by said one element based on the content of said attribute data received from said another element;

correcting the content of said attribute data stored in said storage device to be coincident with the determined content of said attribute data; and

notifying to said another element said determined content of said attribute data.

17. (New) An attribute data correction method according to claim 16, wherein said correcting step includes a step of judging the necessity of correction by comparing between said determined content of said attribute data and said attribute data stored in said storage device.

18. (New) An attribute data correction method according to claim 16, wherein said determining step determines said content of said attribute data within a specific time period, based upon the attribute data received from said another element.

19. (New) An attribute data correction method according to claim 16, wherein said determining step determines said content of said attribute data, based upon the attribute data received from a specific number of said elements other than said one element.

20. (New) An attribute data correction method according to claim 16, wherein said notifying step of notifying to said

another element notifies when all contents received from said another element are not the same.

21. (New) An attribute data correction method according to claim 16, wherein said determining step determines said content of said attribute data based upon the majority rule applied to a plurality of contents received from a plurality of said elements other than the self element.

22. (New) An attribute data correction method according to claim 21, further comprising the step of defining a significance level for each element at a time of updating, based upon a significance parameter;

wherein said step of determining the content of said attribute data determines, based upon a majority rule using said significance level.

23. (New) An attribute data correction method according to claim 16, wherein said data correction method is performed when any of said attribute data is accessed to be read.

24. (New) An attribute data correction method according to claim 16, wherein said data correction method is performed periodically.

25. (New) An attribute data correction method according to claim 16, wherein said data correction method is performed at a predetermined time.

26. (New) An attribute data correction method according to claim 22, wherein said significance level is defined based upon the number of times of updating the stored attribute data and said significance level is used as a weight of an attribute data applied in the majority rule.

27. (New) An attribute data correction method according to claim 22, wherein said significance level is defined based upon the updating event for the stored attribute data.

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